

RFP# NUR-1107
ADDENDUM
 January 11, 2008

ADDENDUM NO. 1 TO ALL OFFERORS:

Reference - Request for Proposals:	<u># NUR-1107</u>
Commodity:	<u>Nurse Aide Competency Examination Services</u>
Dated:	<u>December 14, 2007</u>
For Delivery To:	ATTN: Michal N. Ketner Virginia Department of Health Professions Perimeter Center 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300 Richmond, Virginia 23233-1463
Proposal Due:	<u>February 1, 2008</u>

The above is hereby changed to incorporate information provided by the Virginia Department of Health Professions Board of Nursing and Procurement Manager in response to questions posited by potential offerors seeking clarification of the RFP No. NUR-1107. Said questions and responses are below. Questions are in bold type. Responses are underlined.

- (1) **According to the RFP, the contract period is scheduled to begin on July 1st, 2008, and the first examination is scheduled to be delivered on or about the same date. On July 1, 2008 would you permit the contractor to administer a previously developed test form?**

If the contracted is awarded to a new vendor, then provisions will be made for application processing and registration for testing to occur prior to the July 1, 2008 implementation date. Thus, we would expect the new contractor to have ready it's own test for nurse aide competency evaluation by that time.

- (2) **Does the Board wish to own the examination developed under this contract?**

The Board does not currently own the exam it uses, the NNAAP exam. Board ownership of the exam is not a requirement.

- (3) **Is the Board concerned about reciprocity, i.e. is it important to the Board that there candidates receive a nationwide certification or would a statewide certification be sufficient?**

Virginia only issues a state certification from its Nurse Aide Registry. We have a provision for endorsement for certification as a nurse aide when persons have been certified in other states and meet similar requirements as those in Virginia. Reciprocity is not recognized.

- (4) **Is the oral exam simply an orally presented version of the written exam, or is the exam an English competency exam?**

It is both. The written exam will be offered in English only. There is also to be an option for an oral exam (in English) which would include a limited literacy component (in writing) that measures the individual's ability to comprehend basic written information.

- (5) **Is the performance exam administered immediately following the written exam?**

Yes, for first-time test takers.

- (6) **If a candidate fails the practical portion of the exam, may they take the practical exam by itself at their next testing, or must both sections of the exam be taken each time?**

They may retake only the portion they failed. However, both written and skills portions must be passed within a two year period.

- (7) **Is there an existing group of subject matter experts that regularly work on the exam, or an existing pool of subject matter experts?**

There is with the current vendor. The vendor is responsible for identifying the SME and gathering them for this purpose.

- (8) **Are subject matter experts compensated for job analysis and test development activities? If so, how are they compensated? e.g. - hourly rate, daily honorarium, per Diem?**

That decision is left up to the testing vendor.

- (9) **Is geographic representation on the subject matter expert committee an important consideration for the Board?**

The importance of the geographic representation would depend on where the exam is being offered (i.e., how many states use the exam versus only a test developed for Virginia nurse aides). Additionally, consideration should be given to the job analysis whether national, regional, or statewide.

- (10) **If subject matter experts are not compensated for activities, would the board be amenable to allowing the contractor to provide continuing education credits as an incentive for participation?**

That decision is left up the testing vendor.

- (11) **How long has the Nurse's Aide certification been in existence?**

Nurse aide certification began in Virginia in 1989.

- (12) **When was the last job analysis for this classification performed? Will the contractor have access to previous job analysis data?**

The most recent job analysis was conducted in 2005 by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing in conjunction with our current vendor. The decision would be up to NCSBN and the vendor as to its availability to others.

- (13) **What is the total number of Certified Nurses Aides in the state of Virginia?**

As of January 10, 2008, there are 42,539 C.N.A.s in Virginia.

- (14) **Is the Board requesting this information of resumes and current direct phone numbers, fax numbers, and e-mail addresses of all key personnel to be included in the proposal submission or upon contract award*?**

***Reference: "III. 13. Communication with the Board.**

- 1. provide the Board with resumes and current direct phone numbers, fax numbers, and e-mail addresses of all key personnel associated with the contract resulting from this RFP, including key subcontractor personnel, if applicable."**

The Board would expect this information both at the time of proposal submission, as well as on an ongoing basis, if the contract is awarded.

- (15) **Does the Board want a list of only nurse aide contracts or a list of all of offeror's state regulatory contracts?**

Reference: "IV. 2. Specific Proposal Requirements.

3a. Experience in providing the services described herein and a list of contracts or users of the Offeror's services for examinations held in the past

a. five years including contact information."

The response should not be limited to nurse aide testing service experience, but include all state regulatory testing experiences.

- (16) **Page 3, Section II Background – This section indicates that the current fee paid directly to the contractor by each candidate is \$80. Is there a statutory limit of any kind on the examination fees? What fees are charged for candidates taking only a single portion of the examination?**

There is no statute that address the amount of the testing fee. Currently, the fee for written exam only is \$33; the fee for skills only is \$47; the fee for oral exam only \$43.

- (17) **Page 4, Section II Background – This section indicates that the Board anticipates between 4,600 and 5,300 applicants per year. Is the candidate volume typically spread evenly across all months or are there peak testing periods? If there are peaks, when do they occur?**

There are no consistent trends in testing volume. However, a vendor could anticipate less volume during holiday times and summer, when education programs located in high schools are not in session.

- (18) **Page 4, Section II Background – This section indicates that the Board prefers that the examination be administered in pencil-paper format although alternative methods may be acceptable. Please provide additional insight on the reasons behind this preference for pencil-paper exams.**

There are several reasons for the preference of the paper and pencil exam. There is a contract requirement for 18 Regional Test Sites (RTS) that must include a skills lab to offer that portion of the exam on the same day as the written exam. Many of these RTS who have the skills labs for testing, would not be able to provide adequate computer equipment necessary to conduct written exams in this manner for the number of candidates to be tested. Many of these RTS are at remote rural locations that would have difficulty providing the necessary computer equipment. Additionally, a significant portion of the nurse aide candidate population are of an age that are not necessarily familiar with the use of computers, which would give an unfair advantage to some candidates who are familiar.

- (19) **Page 4, Section II Background – Are paid actors (preferred by the Board) currently being used for the manual skills examinations?**

No. As per the last paragraph of Section II. BACKGROUND on page 4 of RFP No. NUR-1107, "Currently the manual skills component of the examination is administered via candidate participation."

- (20) **Page 4, Section III.1 Job Analyses – The RFP requires that the contractor shall provide periodic job analyses at least every three to five years. Is a national job analysis acceptable or does the Board require a Virginia-specific job analysis?**

A national job analysis is acceptable, and has been used regularly in the past.

- (21) **Page 5, Section III.2.a.2 Examination Validity & Reliability – This section requires that the contractor change the questions at a minimum rate of twenty-five (25%) percent. Is this an annual requirement?**

The frequency of change should be consistent with the Joint Standards for Psychological Testing (1999), as referenced in the RFP.

- (22) **Page 5, Section III.3 Examination Information/Material, Development, Printing and Distribution – This section requires in part the distribution of candidate handbooks and examination materials. How many candidate handbooks are distributed in a typical year? What percentage of the handbooks are distributed to individual candidates and what percentage are distributed in bulk to training programs/facilities?**

The expectation is that all nurse aide candidates are provided a candidate handbook with their application. While most nurse aide education programs provide them to their students upon admission to their program, others may call and request them directly. There are approximately 230 approved nurse aide education programs in Virginia at any given time, which should be supplied copies in bulk upon initial approval and an ongoing basis as needed. As stated in the RFP, it is anticipated that 4,600-5,300 applicants would be tested each year based on past data. Additionally, the Board of Nursing obtains a supply of candidate handbooks approximating 500 per year.

- (23) **Page 7, Section III.6.b Administration of Examinations to Candidates with Qualifying Disabilities – How many qualified candidates require special accommodations in a typical year?**

Our experience has been less than 10 per year request accommodations.

- (24) **Page 8, Section III.7 Testing Sites/Facilities – What is the average number of candidates at each testing event? What is the largest event?**

The number of candidates tested at each RTS, as well as frequency of testing, varies depending on the geographic location and number of beds for skills testing available at the particular test site. The numbers range from 5-35 candidates per testing date at various sites. The largest volume of testing candidates tend to be at the Richmond, Northern Virginia, Norfolk/Virginia Beach, and Roanoke sites, most of which test weekly.

- (25) **Page 8, Section III.7 Testing Sites/Facilities – This section indicates that, when feasible, the Contractor shall administer the examination at other sites as requested for additional fees. How many of these “special” administrations occur annually? At how many of these different sites did testing occur in 2007? What additional fees were charged?**

In facility testing is currently offered at no additional cost. The facility must have at least 5 candidates to test and necessary space, equipment, and supplies to test.

In 2007, there were 34 facilities had in-facility testing. A total of 124 examinations were administered at these in-facility sites (some on the same date at different locations). A total of 1,069 candidates were tested at the various in-facility sites on various days in 2007.

- (26) **Page 9, Section III.9.b.1 Reporting – Given that the Board shall be provided with test results either at the same time or prior to test results being released to candidates, please confirm that preliminary results are not to be provided at the testing centers. Also, if a computer-based examination administration is utilized, please confirm that candidate official results are not to be provided at the testing center immediately upon completion of the exams.**

The Board has never permitted exam results of any type to be provided to candidates immediately and in person at the test site. The Board would not expect to change that policy.

- (27) **Page 9, Section III.9.b.4 Reporting – Please provide an overview of the current applicant score review or verification process.**

Currently, a duplicate score report or hand-scored answer sheet can be requested by the candidate for a \$15 fee. A form to request this is included in the current Candidate handbook.

- (28) **Page 13, Section IV.2.6 Small Business Subcontracting Plan and Section V.1 Evaluation Criteria – 20 points are being allocated to the Small Business Subcontracting Plan. Please provide additional information on how these points will be awarded.**

Each offeror that is a DMBE-certified small business and that would serve as a prime vendor if awarded the contract will receive full credit (20 points) for small business utilization. The maximum number of points available if the offeror is not a DMBE-certified small business is 75% of the points assigned to this evaluation criterion (15 points). Each offeror that is not a DMBE-certified small business will be assigned points by multiplying this 15 points by the quotient of the offeror's proposed subcontracting expenditures with DMBE certified small businesses for the initial contract period divided by the offeror's total price for the initial contract period. No offeror or subcontractor shall be considered a Small Business, a Women-Owned Business or a Minority-Owned Business unless certified as such by the Department of Minority Business Enterprise (DMBE) by the due date for receipt of proposals.

- (29) **Attachment B, Exam Statistics – Virginia's pass rate on the Written/Oral Exam (along with the majority of other states listed) is extremely high. Does the Board have any concerns about the possibility that the assessment tool may not differentiate well between those candidates that are minimally competent and those that aren't? Does the Board have any concerns about possible over-exposure of the exam content?**

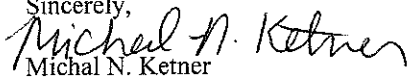
No. The skills portion helps differentiate between the minimally competent and those that are not. Additionally, overexposure is not a concern as multiple test forms are used simultaneously and rotated constantly for both written and skills exams.

- (30) **General: When does the Board plan to announce an award of the contract?**

The Board will announce its award of contract after its Board meeting on March 18, 2008.

Note: A signed acknowledgment of this addendum must be received at the location indicated on the RFP either prior to the proposal due date and hour or attached to your proposal. Signature on this addendum does not substitute for your signature on the original proposal document. The original proposal document must be signed.

Sincerely,



Michael N. Ketner

Procurement Manager

Phone: (804) 367-4615

Name of Firm: _____

Name and Title: _____
(Print)

Name and Title: _____
(Sign in Ink)

Date: _____